

March 2018

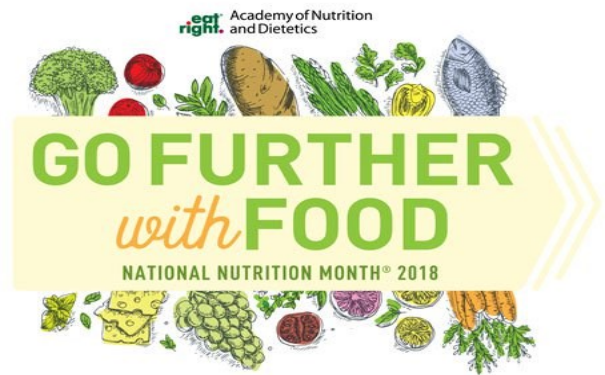
Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living



National Nutrition Month ® 2018: Go Further With Food - Decreasing Food Waste

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics began a month-long observance for Nutrition in 1980. Thirty-eight years later it is still going strong. March is National Nutrition Month® and this year's slogan is **Go Further With Food**. There are hundreds of ways we can go further with food. One of those is by decreasing food waste by storing and buying food correctly.



Food waste occurs when an edible item goes unconsumed. This can happen when produce is thrown out at the grocery because it looks bad; or when consumers may leave food on their plates and it ends up in the trash. Other reasons include buying too much produce, cooking too much, serving large portion sizes, and not understanding the dates on the food that is purchased.

Wasted food can cause an increase in cost for our food supply. It can also affect the environment by ending up in landfills. One of the biggest concerns for food waste is that many households do not have enough food, meaning they are food insecure.

Where To Start:

When you look in your kitchen at the food you buy or when you are checking the

food at the store you may see dates on the packages. Many times these dates will state “Use by”, “Best by”, “sell by”, and “Best Before” followed by an up-coming date. These can mean different things and may not mean you have to throw away the food once the date is passed.

“Use by”, “Best by” and “Best Before” dates are found on foods such as condiments. These products typically don’t need to be refrigerated until opened. Usually they are safe to eat after the date as long as they have been stored properly.

“Sell by” dates are typically on perishable foods, such as meat and dairy products. These products could possibly be used a few days after the date as long as the food has been stored at a safe temperature.

Food Safety Comes First:

- Never risk eating or drinking anything that you suspect as being spoiled.
- Eat leftovers within 3 to 4 days (or freeze for up to 3-4 months).
- You can download the app “[Is my Food Safe](#)” or accessing the [FoodKeeper App](#) online. It will help you determine if it is time to toss out food items you may question.
- Make sure your dry storage is dry and cool. Make sure your refrigerator is 40 degrees F and below and your freezers are keeping food frozen, usually 0 degrees F.
- Rotate your pantry items so that food with the closest dates are up front.
- Place quickly spoiled food within sight, up front in the refrigerator and freezers.
- Wait to wash produce until it is time to prepare.
- Learn what fruits and vegetables to store in the refrigerator. Which fruits and vegetable that need to be separated and what foods are best stored in a cool, dark and dry place.



When Planning Your Meals:

- Make an inventory of the food already in your house and find recipes that will use those ingredients.
- Make a grocery list for only the food you will need to purchase.
- Buy only the amount of food that can be eaten within the week.
- Be aware of the “Use by” and “Sell by” dates. If you are going to pass up the date or feel you will not use it before it spoils, place it in the freezer to thaw out later.
- Transform left-overs into soups, salads or sandwiches.
- Plan meals around each other. If you are using lettuce on Monday and won’t use it all, find away to use the rest the following day.

References:

<http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/media/press-releases/national-nutrition-month>

<http://www.eatright.org/resources/national-nutrition-month>

<http://www.eatright.org/find-an-expert> (To find a Dietitian near you go to this website)

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